



Summer 2006

Volume 21 Issue 3

# Region V Aging Services Newsletter

## Summer 2006

**North Dakota**  
**"A Caring Place To  
Grow Old"**

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Hello everyone! A heartfelt thank-you to the Hillsboro Senior Center for hosting the Region V Council on Aging meeting on Friday May 19, 2006. We enjoyed your hospitality and lovely center. I think everyone agreed that our speaker, Anita Flatt, Attorney with Legal Services of North Dakota gave us very interesting and useful information.

We have a special July meeting planned. The July 21, 2006 meeting of the Region V Council on Aging will begin at the Senior Center in Lisbon. In the morning, we will hold our business meeting and Deb Lee, Ransom County Extension Agent will speak to us about senior nutrition. We will eat our noon lunch at the Lisbon Senior Center. For those of you who are interested, we will then take a trip to the scenic village of Fort Ransom to tour the sites and have afternoon coffee at Hartley's Café, a unique Title III Meal Site. You will find the days agenda in this newsletter.

The September 15, 2006 meeting will be held at the Portland Senior Center. We are still looking for a host for the October 20, 2006 meeting. If your senior center would like to host the October 20th meeting, please let me know.

Don't forget to mark the Northern Plains Conference on Aging and Disability on your calendar. It will be held at the Fargo Holiday Inn on September 6 & 7, 2006. The cost of the Conference is \$25 for retired persons age 60 and over if you are registered by August 21, 2006. The cost is \$30 after August 21 and \$35 if you register at the door. Fees for professionals and those under 60 begin at \$65. A noon luncheon on the 6th and a full buffet breakfast on the 7th are included in your registration fee. Brochures will not be mailed until early

# Governor's Committee On Aging – An Overview

*Submitted by Amy Clark – Vice-Chair*

The Governor's Committee On Aging was established to act as an advisory body to the Aging Services Division as set forth in the Older Americans Act of 1965. Through the exchange of ideas and information on national, state and local levels relating to aging; the committee also acts as an advocacy body for seniors in the state of North Dakota. The committee's 14 members are appointed by the Governor to three-year terms. These members represent all eight regions including the five tribal councils. Please contact any member of the committee with questions or concerns. The Governor's Committee on Aging holds open meetings quarterly each year.

The following individuals are currently serving on the Governor's Committee on Aging: Mr. Frederick Baker – Chairman (New Town); Ms. Amy Clark – Vice-Chair (Bismarck); Ms. Mary K. Nester – Secretary (Minot); Ms. Shirley Blake – Historian (Fargo); Ms. Betty Keegan (Rolla); Ms. Alecia Hanson (Williston); Ms. Mary Grosz (Hazen); Mr. Marty Heller (Beulah); Mr. Jake Dosch (Valley City); Mr. Larry Wagner (Bismarck); Mr. Kelly Wentz (Fargo); Ms. Gloria Left Hand (St. Michael); Ms. Elaine Keepseagle (Fort Yates); and Ms. Theola Stetson (Taylor)

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## Are You Ready?

### Just in Case: Emergency Readiness for Older Adults and Caregivers

Although seniors made up only 15% of the population of New Orleans before Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, according to Knight Ridder, 74% of the hurricane victims were older adults. These events served as a grim reminder that older adults are disproportionately at risk in disaster situations, and emergency preparation is an even greater concern for this population.

The US Administration on Aging's National Family Caregiver Support Program and Caresource Healthcare Communications, Inc. are pleased to announce the new consumer guide *Just In Case: Emergency Readiness for Older Adults and Caregivers*.

This free consumer resource includes a 12-page fact sheet and checklist that will help older adults and caregivers prepare for emergencies. Special emphasis is placed on issues that affect older adults, disabled persons, and their caregivers due to medical conditions, physical challenges, assistive devices, and mobility issues.

*Just in Case* presents an easy-to-do three step approach to emergency preparedness:

- Step 1 focuses on a handful of essential things a person should know.
- Step 2 covers emergency supplies, both for surviving at home and for evacuation if necessary.
- Step 3 is creating a personal plan that takes into account a person's own unique medical and physical needs.

***Just in Case* is a supplement to *Aging in Stride*, a 380-page guide to healthy aging and effective eldercare. The new supplement is available as a free consumer resource at the Aging in Stride website [www.aginginstride.org](http://www.aginginstride.org), on the Administration on Aging's website [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov), and included with purchases of the book *Aging in Stride*. *Aging in Stride* is available at [www.aginginstride.org](http://www.aginginstride.org) or by calling (800)448-5213.**

# *Region V Council on Aging*

Friday July 21, 2006

**Lisbon Senior Center**  
625 Main Street, Lisbon, ND  
public is welcome

**10:00 - 10:15      Registration**

**10:15 - 10:45      Welcome by President Orvin Hagen**

Pledge of Allegiance  
Roll Call of Counties  
Secretarial Report – Marlyne Skramstad  
Treasurer's Report – Jean Grinde  
Old Business  
New Business



**Determine Place of October 20th, 2006**

**Meeting**

**Silver-Haired Assembly Update—Louise Haarstad**

**Governors Committee on Aging—Kelly Wentz and/or Shirley Blake**

**Announcements—Sandy Arends**

**10:45 AM-12:00 Noon      Senior Nutrition —** Deb Lee , Ransom County Extension Agent will provide you with lots of information about nutritional considerations as we age. Deb has had extensive experience speaking with senior groups on this topic.

**12:00 Noon - 12:45 PM      Lunch \* See process to register for meal below**

**12:45 PM - 3:00 PM      Road excursion to Fort Ransom.** Jean Thielman, Director of Ransom/Sargent Senior Services is making arrangements for us to visit a new Bed & Breakfast; the Arts & Crafts Building and hear about the history of Fort Ransom. We will end with coffee at Hartley's Café. Each person is responsible to pay for their own coffee and whatever they may order off the menu.

**Note:** Please register for the noon meal at the Lisbon Senior Center by calling Sandy at 1-888-342-4900 or (701) 298-4420. Meal reservations must be called in by Wednesday, July 19, 2006. People attending are responsible to pay for their own meal. The suggested donation for the noon meal for persons age 60 and over is \$3.00. The meal charge for persons under age 60 is \$6.00.

# ND Family Caregiver Support Program

The well-known writer Mark Twain wrote: “The difference between the right word and the almost right word is the difference between the lightning and the lightning bug.” As with all relationships, effective communication is the most important skill for family caregivers. Communication with the medical professionals; elder care providers such as Meals on Wheels and home-health staff; and with siblings is essential for safe and effective caregiving.

The most important communication that a caregiver may most need to improve, however, is communication with the care recipient! Most older adults are independent and have their own ideas and opinions about their lives and care worthy of our respect.

Most people will admit that the biggest problems in relationships involve communication. Below are ideas for caregivers to improve communication to avoid problems and improve the overall care of a parent, spouse or other care recipient.

## Top Ten Communication Basics Between Caregivers and Care Recipient

1. **Breath.** Take a couple of deep breaths before you start a conversation. If the conversation becomes emotional or difficult, stop and take another few deep breaths to help you calm down and focus.
2. **Really listen.** As someone once said: “There is a reason that we have two ears and one mouth.” Listen to what the person says and check out what the person is hearing you say. For example, “Do you agree that we might want to call the nurse and talk to her about this problem with your medication?” Listen to silence. Silence allows someone to think about what is being discussed or about a response.
3. **Ask questions.** Find out what is really going on. Are you assuming some things about what the other person is saying because you think you know everything that is going on?
4. **Use body language to improve communication** (non-verbal cues in how you use eye contact, gestures, and your distance from the person). Look the person in the eye. Lean into the person or put a hand on the person’s arm or shoulder, but remember that not everyone likes to be touched.
5. **Slow down.** Take your time. Avoid trying to talk about and do everything at once. Communication at an even pace allows everyone to think through the conversation and how to respond.
6. **Pay attention to what the person is saying and how they are behaving.** Do the words and the behavior match? Could the person be talking about something very different than what they really want, but they do not know how to say it or ask for something? Be aware that fear may make someone hesitate to say what is really going on. Most care recipients fear admitting to certain problems and concerns that may lead to a further loss of independence.
7. **Talk directly to the person.** It may be easy for caregivers to ‘multi-task’ as they prepare meals, do laundry, take someone to the grocery store, or accompany a parent to a doctor appointment. Set aside time to have one-on-one conversation. This may save time in the long run because misunderstandings can be avoided. If the care recipient feels heard and understood, he/she may talk about something that is a concern. Identifying concerns and problem-solving can avoid problems later.

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8. **Speak distinctly and clearly - but not louder.** Some older adults do not like to admit that they may not hear and understand conversations around them. The higher pitch of many women's voices may be a problem for some older adults so women may need to consciously lower their voice.
9. **Avoid arguing.** Listen to concerns and try to understand the other person's experience and opinions. Remember that it is still his or her life and care. Focus on meeting unmet needs and not conflict.
10. **Use humor when appropriate.** Humor can help ease tension. Most caregivers and care recipients know each other well enough to find humor in the situation.

Are you a caregiver of an older adult? Are you an older adult caring for a child age 18 or younger? Contact the Family Caregiver Support Program to see what services may be available to you. Possibilities include: Respite Care, Counseling and Training. For answers to any questions you may have contact LeAnne Thomas, Region V Family Caregiver Support Program Coordinator at Southeast Human Service Center in Fargo. Her phone number is 701-298-4480 or toll free: 1-888-342-4900. Her e-mail address is: 85thol@nd.gov

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## Facts About Water

- 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated.
- In 37% of Americans, the thirst mechanism is so weak that it is often mistaken for hunger.
- Even MILD dehydration will slow down one's metabolism as much as 3%.
- One glass of water will shut down midnight hunger pangs for almost 100% of the dieters studied in a University of Washington study.
- Lack of water is the #1 trigger of daytime fatigue.
- Preliminary research indicates that 8 – 10 glasses of water a day could significantly ease back and joint pain for up to 80% of sufferers.
- A mere 2% drop in body water can trigger fuzzy short-term memory, trouble with basic math, and difficulty focusing on the computer screen or on a printed page.

*Re-printed from The Senior Sentinel*

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## Truths Children Have Learned

No matter how hard you try, you can't baptize cats.  
When your Mom is mad at your Dad, don't let her brush your hair.  
You can't trust dogs to watch your food.  
You can't hide a piece of broccoli in a glass of milk.  
Puppies still have bad breath even after eating a Tic-Tac.

# What is the Graying of North Dakota Coalition?

Submitted by Amy Clark

The Graying of North Dakota Coalition was organized in January of 2000 by the Governor's Committee on Aging and AARP North Dakota. The purpose of this statewide coalition is to bring together organizations and agencies that share common goals and interests in service to older individuals and individuals with disabilities. The discussions at the meetings may result in new legislation and may contribute to and affect public policy decisions.

During the 2005 Legislative Session, Graying of North Dakota initiated a letter-to-the-editor campaign in support of rebalancing our system of care in the long term, and representatives Betty Keegan and Rodger Wetzel testified at committee hearings regarding the needs of caregivers. Those efforts resulted in a 2.65% increase for in-home caregivers. We also achieved advances in policy for our guardianship program.

The membership of the coalition includes over 30 advocacy organizations that include state, county and private service providers. Together, these members represent over 120,000 vulnerable citizens of North Dakota.

The Graying of North Dakota Coalition holds regular meetings that are open to the public – contact the Regional Aging Services Program Administrator in your Region for more information.

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## ***Ten Walking Tips***

### The Principle of Recovery

As Edward Payson Weston advised – after any walking performance, you should always be able to come back the very next day and repeat it. Weston himself often walked 50 miles a day, day after day.

### When to Walk

Walk anytime! If you walk after meals, slow down enough to give digestion a chance. No time is better than the time that suits you. Regularity is the key factor.

### Natural Gated Walking

The best walking technique is the one that's natural for you. Walking with weights (ankle weights or hand weights) is unnatural. Weights change your center of gravity, rhythm and biomechanics, not to mention the ballistic stress they put on your connective tissues.

### 3 ½ MPH Walking

3 ½ mile-per-hour walking is about the most important speed a walker can learn. This pace causes little fatigue or leg soreness. It's your all-family, stay-together place. Yet 3 ½ mph is not all that slow. At 3 ½ mph, stored fat becomes the major source of fuel for your working muscles.

### Hills

In climbing, lean forward into the hill. Do not hesitate to slow up your pace. In descending, shift your weight back, taking shorter shuffle steps.

### Warming Up & Cooling Down

Walking is the best warm-up/cool-down exercise because it doesn't strain cold muscles, and it helps the heart and blood vessels adjust gradually to blood circulation changes. If you are a 4 mph walker for example, consider warming up (and cooling down) at 3 ½ mph.

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### Daytime Foot Care

"Listen" to your feet talk. When they start whispering "we're getting warm", that's the time to slip off your shoes. Immediately! Then air cool, clean and re-powder your feet.

### Nighttime Foot Care

Avoid hard, cracked, callus skin by soaking and washing your feet in warm water. After drying, massage in wool's fat (lanolin) on all foot surfaces (assuming no allergy to lanolin). Sleep with your feet in open air for good oxygen exchange.

### Mind Games

When boredom starts to set in, change the subject! Think of dinner. Observe the clouds. Plan a family outing. Start looking for loose change. If your mind is occupied, it's hard to get bored.

### Walking Off Weight

The best way to walk off weight is to walk for time. Sitting down right now you are burning about 1 calorie per minute. When you stand up and start walking, your metabolic rate increases to about 5 calories per minute.

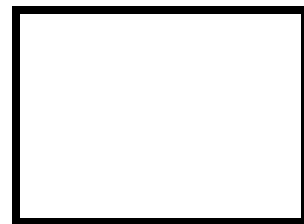
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## Is It Normal - Or a Warning Sign?

**Nervous laughter over age-related mental slips often masks fear over what they could portend. But every minor mix-up is not symptomatic of impending loss of cognition, say mental health experts. Here's how the Alzheimer's Association distinguishes between normal forgetfulness and warning signs of dementia that warrant a doctor's attention.**

	Normal	Warning Signs
<b>Memory</b>	You occasionally forget names or appointments.	You can't recall recently learned information.
<b>Familiar Tasks</b>	You occasionally forget why you came into a room or what you were going to say.	You find it hard to plan or complete everyday tasks. You lose track of the steps to prepare a meal, place a call or play a game.
<b>Language</b>	You sometimes have trouble finding the right word.	You forget simple words or use unusual words, like "that thing for my mouth" instead of "toothbrush."
<b>Orientation to time and place</b>	You sometimes lose track of what day of the week it is or where you were going.	You get lost in your own neighborhood, or forget where you are or how you got there.
<b>Judgment</b>	You sometimes make questionable decisions.	You give away large sums of money to strangers or wear multiple layers of clothing on a warm day.
<b>Abstract thinking</b>	You sometimes find it difficult to balance your checkbook.	You forget what numbers are or how they are used.
<b>Misplacing things</b>	You sometimes forget where you put your keys or important papers.	You put an iron in the freezer or a watch in the sugar bowl.
<b>Personality and mood</b>	Your personality changes somewhat with age. Sometimes you feel moody or sad.	You undergo a dramatic change in personality, with rapid mood swings. You become suspicious, confused or highly dependent.
<b>Initiative</b>	You sometimes feel tired of work or social obligations.	You become extremely passive, sleep more than usual and withdraw from socializing.

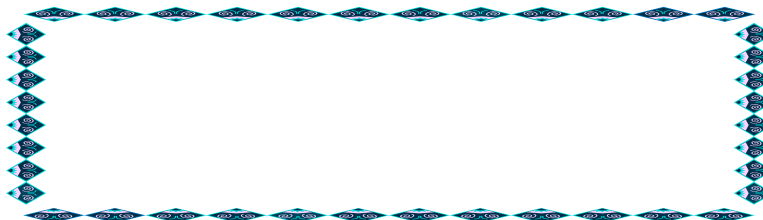
Department of Human Services  
Southeast Human Service Center  
Sandy Arends, Region V Aging Services  
2624 9th Avenue Southwest  
Fargo, North Dakota 58103-2350



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**New Officers/Change of Address:**

If your Senior Organization has a new president (chairperson) or there has been a change of address, please complete and return the form below. Please remove and tape the old mailing label in box below.



**Name of President, Chairperson, Individual or Agency Receive This Newsletter:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street/Avenue/PO:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address (Must include street address or post office box):**

**City and State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nine Digit Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Return to address at the top of this page.**